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EDITORIAL COMMENT

THE NURSE AS A CITIZEN

At this time of national crisis and national need, each nurse should be ready to give herself to her country in the way she can best be of use. Our first duty is to the American Red Cross and when we are asked, as we often are, to identify ourselves with other organizations for relief or defense, our reply should be that the Red Cross is the channel through which we offer all we have to give. Not all nurses are eligible for active nursing service under the Red Cross,—they may be beyond the age limit or they may have had their training in schools which do not come up to the required standard, for them there are open the activities which are offered all interested workers in the classes for making surgical supplies and garments.

Those nurses who are serving on committees having charge of the enrollment of nurses or the teaching of hygiene, first aid or dietetics have an arduous and much needed task, less in the public eye and less crowned with honor than nursing service at the front, but just as necessary and just as glorious, when we think of real values.

The nurses who are caring for the sick in our hospitals and tenements and homes are also doing a needed work which cannot be left undone and are of service to the nation, though not under the Red Cross flag.

Wherever our duty lies, let us be found true women and true nurses, faithful, dependable, working well with others, broad in our sympathies and interests and so doing our part to support our nation's leaders in bringing righteousness and peace once more to this troubled world.

NIGHT DUTY

One of our contributors to the present issue of the JOURNAL gives a picture of night duty which every nurse will recognize as having been

at some time her experience. If all night duty were as harrowing and as wearing, few student nurses would survive the strain of several periods of it; most of them, however, learn in time to adjust themselves to the unnatural mode of life entailed by turning night into day and day into night.

For the sake of those young pupils in our schools who have not learned how to take night duty easily, we should like to give a few suggestions.

The most successful night nurses we have known, those who are able to hold positions as night supervisors for months or even years, without being worn by it, sleep with their windows wide open and their shades up. They feel that they need the sunshine, all they can get, and they say they soon learn to sleep soundly in a bright room. It is difficult to darken a room without shutting out air as well as light and no one sleeps well in a close room or in one with slight ventilation, be it by day or night. It is possible to put a covering over one's eyes to soften the glare, but we believe this method of sleeping would produce better and sounder sleep and would result in more normal health and spirits.

Then, too, when one comes off night duty and has had her breakfast, she should try to take a walk or a ride before going to bed, and a bath, either at night or morning, should be part of her regular routine.

As to food, she should be careful not to drink coffee in the morning, though it may be a help if taken in moderation at evening or in the night.

The sobering experience of meeting serious emergencies alone is one of the most valued parts of our training. The nurse who can forget herself in her effort to minister to those in dire need, the nurse who can meet an emergency with a clear brain, the nurse who will not falter because her work is hard and trying, is the one who will be of use in the world.

A CORRECTION

In the April JOURNAL we misstated the number of states having registration laws. South Dakota brought the number to 45 and if, as we hear,⁶ Utah has also secured a law, the total would be 46.

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